



Living Well

April is National Stress Awareness Month

MANAGING STRESS

Stress is a part of life. It can even be beneficial, helping us meet life's challenges. Unfortunately negative stress can affect our physical and mental well-being.

A moderate amount of stress can be good for you; it keeps you alert and engaged in the world. But too much stress can be overwhelming, cloud thinking, and interfere with relaxation. Setting firm limits and taking regular time for yourself can help you approach situations with more control and find more enjoyment in life.

Decide what's really important

Stress can be caused by a wide variety of factors such as job concerns, family turmoil or personal lifestyle choices. Trying to take care of everything at once can seem overwhelming. Instead, set work and home priorities for yourself, your family and, when appropriate, members of your work group. This will likely involve making difficult choices and delegating tasks but being able to check things off as they are accomplished will provide a sense of satisfaction and relief.

Set limits

If a problem is beyond your control and cannot be changed at the moment, don't fight the situation. But you can still set limits, define expectations, and negotiate the level of your involvement. Learn to say "no" when a request or demand for your time and attention conflicts

with priorities or exceeds limits that have been set. Don't give in to guilt. If you've set priorities and limits objectively, there is no reason to feel guilty.

Take care of yourself

- Get enough rest and eat well. Release the pressure through physical activity. Develop a routine and minimize changes.
- Avoid self-medication. Any medication should be taken only on the advice of your doctor.
- Confide in others. It helps to talk about your worries and concerns with those you trust.
- Make time for fun. Schedule time for both work and recreation.
- Stay connected. Help yourself by helping others. Get involved in your circle of friends and the people around you.
- It's OK to cry. A good cry can be a healthy way to relieve anxiety. Deep breathing is also a good form of tension release.

Take the Stress Test...



SYMMETRY

BALANCED WORKPLACE SERVICES



www.symmetryeap.org

Stress Test

How well do these statements reflect your attitudes and behaviors? Please use the following key to answer each question.

- 4 = Always
- 3 = Frequently
- 2 = Sometimes
- 1 = Never

- _____ I try to do as much as possible in the least amount of time.
- _____ I become impatient with delays or interruptions.
- _____ I have to win at games to enjoy myself.
- _____ I will accelerate my car to beat the red light.
- _____ I would rather deal with something myself than ask for help with a problem.
- _____ I seek the respect and admiration of others.
- _____ I am critical of the way others do their work.
- _____ I have the habit of checking the time.
- _____ I strive to improve my position and make achievements.
- _____ I get angry, irritated or frustrated easily.
- _____ I spread myself too thin in terms of the commitments I make to others.
- _____ I have the habit of doing more than one thing at a time.
- _____ I wish I had more time for hobbies or opportunities to spend by myself.
- _____ I have a tendency to talk quickly or hasten conversations.

- _____ I consider myself to be goal-oriented and driven to succeed.
- _____ My friends and family make comments that I should calm down and take it easy.
- _____ I have a tendency to get involved in multiple projects.
- _____ My work requires completing projects on deadline.
- _____ I feel guilty if I relax or do something leisurely.
- _____ I take on too many responsibilities.

_____ TOTAL

- 20 to 30 You may be non-productive or need stimulation
- 31 to 50 You have a good balance and manage stress well
- 51 to 60 You are bordering on being too tense
- 61 and over You need to find ways to reduce your stress

For more information or assistance managing stress, please contact SYMMETRY at (414) 256-4800 or (800) 236-7905

